Numb. 24.

Heraclitus Ridens,

AT

A DIALOGUE between *JEST* and *EARNEST* Concerning the *TIMES*.

From Tuesday October the 19*th*. to Saturday the 23*th*. 1703.

Jest. I Told you as much—— It's even ſo, upon my Word—— How we ſhall come off, only time can diſcover. As for my part, I deſign to turn ſuch a Rigid Infidel for the future, that I will not ſo much as believe my own Eyes—— Or if I do, no Creature breathing ſhall know it, for fear of having it go under the Name of Scandal.

Earn. What's the matter now? Upon the Stool of Repentance, my Dear Friend! Let me feel your Pulſe a little—— I proteſt the Man's in a downright Feavour—— I warrant you've took a Bottle too much, and ſo fell out with your beſt Friends, as People in that Condition generally do.

Jeſt. You are very wide of the Matter—— I fell out with no body, but there is a certain Gentleman that is fallen out with me.

Earn. Upon what Account? Without doubt you have given him ſome occaſion or other—— Therefore, prithee explain your ſelf, I'll turn Mediator, poſſibly it may be in my power to make up this Breach, and Reconcile him.

Jeſt. And poſſibly, you may be miſtaken—— You ſtand in need of a Mediator as much as my ſelf—— For the Perſon that is at Varience with me, has alſo conceiv'd a Diſpleaſure againſt you, and we are equally concern'd in the ſame Affair.

Earn. I am ſorry to hear it—— To the beſt of my Knowledge, I have behav'd my ſelf ſo as to avoid giving any manner of Offence—— I am in pain till I hear the Name of the Perſon, that I may make him Amends, if I have any ways injur'd him.

Jeſt. If you remember; there was an Account from *Cambridge* in our laſt *Saturday*'s Paper, and a Story of a Gentleman's coming out *Wales*; What ſay you to that, Friend? We have made a fine Kettle of Fiſh of it. For there is a Gentleman in the World that takes it upon himſelf; Can you tell the Perſon it was deſign'd for?

Earn. Not I, upon my word—— I heard that Paper had made a Noiſe indeed, but never imagin'd we ſhould fall under any one's Cenſure for it—— For we that ſet up to Divert the Publick, muſt have ſome Intelligence, in order to make our Merriment Circulate, or we ſhall be never able to hold it. For no Man in his Senſes, can imagine that Papers of this Nature can Eſtabliſh themſelves without Correſpondence. You know very well that we frequently receive Letters from unknown Hands, and in 'em many Things that we do not think fit to Communicate, by Reaſon of Perſons Names contain'd in 'em, and the bitter Reflections that came along with 'em. But our Intelligence from *Cambridge*, &c. coming without any ſuch marks of Infamy on any known Perſon whatſoever, and only hinting at ſome undue Practices in a Juſtice of the Peace, whoſe Name we are to ſeek for, I could not imagine any ſingle Perſon would take that upon himſelf, which other Magiſtrates might think themſelves equally concern'd in.

Jeſt. But you have Reckon'd without your Hoſt this time—— Your Friends in the City will have it to be upon one of their Chief Officers, ſay you what you will to the contrary, and unleſs we prevent the ill Conſequence, *Nob* will have his Aim, and there will be an End of two Fools that could not keep themſelves out of Harms way, when they had ſo large a Field to walk in Safety in. Prithee go, and down with your Marrow-Bones, and own the Fact, Right or Wrong, if you would have any Favour ſhewn. That ſober Countenance of yours may do much—— And take *Heraclitus* along with you for your Aſſiſtant, for I am ſuch a Grinning ſort of a Fellow, that I'm in no wiſe fit for ſuch an Employ.

Earn. Your Humble Servant, Sir—— I have more Reſpect for this Body of mine than that comes to. I beſeech you to take the Trouble upon your own Hands. I ſhall own nothing that I never was guilty of. But to do every one that Juſtice which is due to them, eſpecially Men in Places of Truſt and Authority, I am ready to ask Pardon of any Magiſtrate or Officer whaſoever, that I have injur'd, and ſhall endeavour to be ſo Circumſpect for the future, as to give no Handle for a Complaint.

Jeſt. But all this will not do—— *Nob* has got the Scent of you, and he'll hunt you, till he runs you down—— But now I think of it, he owns in his laſt, that he was Born under a *Lying Planet*, for he makes his *Countryman* tell him, that it has *the Aſcendant over him*, which is as much as to confeſs himſelf much adicted to Lying, if you would take the literal Senſe of his Expreſſions.

Earn. I ſhall not give my ſelf ſo much as the Trouble of taking Notice of what he ſays in relation to that Affair. The Waſp is got abroad, and has loſt his Sting, tho' he may chance to come home with a Sting in his Tayl, if he does not make out what he pretended to prove.

Jeſt:

Jeſt. What, I warrant he deſigns to wait at the *Lobby* Door next Seſſion of Parliament, as the *Iriſhman* did to get a *Plaſh*. Some more Complaints, and as much to the purpoſe as his laſt—— Or perhaps he has got another Fool, inſtead of *Fuller*, to play upon, and would Trump up t'other Bundle of Scandal, ſince his laſt was Succeſsleſs

Earneſt. I am not againſt the Detection of Miſmanagements, but generally ſpeaking, the Complaints are received or rejected according to the Characters of the perſons who bring 'em in. Men in *Places of Truſt*, and *Poſſeſs'd of High Dignities*, are not to be diſplac'd upon every frivolous *Intermedler*'s Account, and his Maſters at the *Victualling-Office* would have done him but Juſtice before, had they laid their Actions upon him for falſe Accuſations, which I underſtand thoſe he now threatens deſign, unleſs he makes out the Articles he pretends to Charge 'em with.

Jeſt. Hold,——fair and ſoftly —— or you'll make ſuch a ſlip as you cannot eaſily extricate your ſelf from? A word more, and he would have Sworn that you went to deter the Queen's Evidence from making good his Allegations for the Common Intereſt. Is is not the firſt time that he has taken you up before you fell, therefore it's your Buſineſs to be Cautious. He's turn'd Oil-Man as well as Evidence, and knows how to pickle up a Complaint, a mere Monſieur *Ragou* in Cookery, and much more fitting for the Pantry than the Study, as you may ſee by his Greeſineſs and his Writings.

Earn. I look upon him to be a Man of Evidential Capacities, — and fitter for that Employ than any Man breathing now, except the Reverend Dr. *Oates*, who is arriv'd at the higheſt Perfection in that Myſterious Art, and is the *Ne plus ultra* to ſucceeding Generations. And I ſpeak for his good, I would have him let fall the *Obſervator*, and Ply at *Weſtminſter-Hall*, or the *Old-Baily*: He may get Money by the Bargain, and make much more than a Guinea a Week, which is the Sum Total he ventures his Neck for now.

Jeſt. The Sum Total, ſay you? It's more by One and Twenty Shillings and Sixpence than he deſerves, though I approve of your Project for making a Witneſs of him. He's a good ſturdy Fellow, notwithſtanding he is ſo very weak in his Arguments, and will drive an Untruth as far as any Lye-Smith of 'em all. He has got him a Partner now, I am given to underſtand, who has Influence enough over a parcel of fooliſh Fellows, to Hammer out Scandal againſt an Acquaintance of ours. Is there no Remedy againſt ſuch Proceedings as theſe? A Man may be bawl'd about the Town at this rate, and have no Means in his hand to Right himſelf.

Earn. None as I know for while the Preſs is open. That Acquaintance of ours muſt pay 'em in their own Coin, that is all that I can ſay, for he is not over-ſtock'd with Money to go to Law with 'em, which the very honeſt Bookſellers that undertake it, know very well. And it is not to be doubted but he will, for I underſtand he is well enough acquainted with all their ways of Living, to do it home enough. Not, but I could wiſh no ſuch thing was to be ſuffer'd, and that the Government would ſuppreſs the Exorbitant Liberty every Scribler takes of having recourſe to the Preſs, to run Mumping about, and making Intereſt with Noblemens Porters with; for, by that means we ſhould Traffick as little in Scandal, as other Countries, where nothing is Tolerated to be done openly of that Nature; as in *France*, *Holland*, *&c.* And 'tis not to be queſtion'd, but at the approaching Seſſion of Parliament, our wiſe Repreſentatives will ſo far concur with Her Majeſties Opinion in Her laſt Gracious Speech, as to take Effectual Care, that the Abuſes ſhe therein Complains of, be Remedied, and that it be out of the Power of Factious, and ill diſpos'd People to Write againſt the Conſtitution Eſtabliſh'd in Church or State.

Jeſt. So much for Printing—— Now for the Subjects that are fitting for the Preſs—— An Excellent Topick for your *Elemoſinarian Poets* to Treat Bookbinders with. Suppoſe a Worthy Author that is Champion for the *Whigs* at the ſame time, that he is taken up with Preſenting a Copy of Verſes to the next Lord Mayor, who is Eminent for being an Ornament to the Church of *England*, ſhould write *Anathema's* againſt the Duke of *Vendoſm*, for Seizing the Duke of *Savoy*'s Troops, Do you think he might not get a Penny by it? Perſwade him to it, he's an old Acquaintance of yours, and perhaps may Rhime him Dead, which will be of exceeding Uſe, for he's a damn'd Troubleſom ſort of a Duke, and ſome peoples Rhimes have ſo much *Opium* in 'em, that they are capable of lulling a Man into his laſt Sleep.

Earn. A *Death*, or an *Aditional Title*, is the beſt occaſion for him, and he's as certainly to be found at a Chriſtening, or a Burying, as a Parſon or a Sexton. Watch him narrowly, ſay I, and catch him without his Body Guard, and he has no more Poetry in him than you or I have. But I ſhall take care to ſpoil him for a Mendicant Son of the Muſes for the future, as he may no longer make other people Fools for parting with their Money to him, nor himſelf one, for feeding Horſe-Leeches with other peoples Blood. But he's below our Notice, and the perſon that wrote the Novel of *Meſſalina*, wherein he ſo much Abuſes a Prince whom he wrote a Recantation to, will do any thing; and ſo good Day to him, till the Sun or Moon gives us a Sight of him.

Advertiſement.

HIT *or Miſs*, or a Man's Effigies Right or Wrong, 'tis all one; a Finiſhing by a Sign-poſt Dauber, not a Mile from *Smithfield*. He has as much Senſe as the Fatteſt Beaſt in that Market, and if it were not a Damn'd Lye, I would ſay the *Lincolnſhire* Ox. This Curious Effigies is to be ſeen at an Advertiſement Monger's, and there is a Triumverate of Good Chriſtians that will Ruine any Body to get a penny by it, ready to Expoſe it to publick Sale on the firſt Opportunity

Printed by *D. Edwards* and Sold by the Bookſellers of *London* and *Weſtminſter*. 1703.